

**Kerry Vander Meer**

Artist Statement

I studied with David Ireland while in an MFA program in the 80's. My first memory was a class field trip of his house on Capp St. with David graciously showing us around. I was struck by his delightful sense of humor and charm.

Of all David's pieces, the one that jumps to mind the first, is his collection of old brooms he found buried in random places in his house on Capp St. Each broom held its own story; some barely a stub. Yet David put all those brooms together and it became a beautiful sculpture full of rich history. To hear him talk about finding the brooms was half of the story. He has influenced my art making/finding in a big way and over the years I have made sculptures of odd materials such as potatoes, hair, rubber, pantyhose and other objects found here and there.

"Bones of Eire":

While in a residency program in a small pre-famine village called Cill Rialaig in County Kerry, Ireland, I visited Skelligs Michael, which is a small island off the coast of West Ireland. To get to the island, you take a launch and after docking, climb 670 steep steps to the top where 12 monks lived beginning about 550 AD. The monks transcribed religious and classic texts; some claim they saved Western civilization.

I was greatly moved by my experiences on this island and began cutting up potatoes and reassembling them. The first piece I did in my little cabin on the Atlantic was of a bottomless boat made entirely of potatoes. If David had a knife and potatoes as I had, he may have done something quite different but I think they connect to his Irish roots as well as mine. David also visited Skelligs Michael and in 1995, Friends of Photography published his photographs in a book titled "David Ireland: Skellig".